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## **Garcia Announces Environmental Protection Measures**

### *Legislative Package will Restrict Incoming Waste*

LANSING—Without creating fee increases for Michigan residents, the inspection of landfills and transported waste from Canada and neighboring states will increase, thanks to the passage of a 14 bill package, state Sen. Valde Garcia, R-Howell, announced today.

“This package is designed to protect our environment without discriminating against interstate commerce,” said Garcia. “As legislators, it is our responsibility to protect the natural resources that make this state so special.”

The bills include the following key provisions:

- Authorizes the state Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to establish a statewide inspection program, which would mandate at least four inspections each year of each landfill to ensure compliance. Random inspections would also be conducted to help ensure compliance.
- Starting Oct. 1, 2004, landfills would be required to refuse waste, regardless of its source, that did not meet Michigan’s stringent waste standards.
- Adds two important new landfill bans—beverage containers and whole tires— to further reduce reliance on landfills and encourage recycling.
- Grants the DEQ director emergency power to prohibit any waste shipment that poses a threat to the public’s health or safety or to the safety of the environment.
- Adds new fines, of up to \$25,000 per day, for violating certain laws related to disposing of waste in landfills.
- Mandates a 2-year moratorium on issuing certain new landfill permits.
- Two resolutions urge Congress to act to allow states to control the flow and deposit of out-of-state waste.

The package, which received strong bi-partisan support in the Senate, now goes to the House for consideration.